



Technical Mapping Advisory Council

Minutes Philadelphia, PA Meeting June 1-2, 2000

Thursday June 1, 2000

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:23 a.m. (ET). The following members were in attendance for all or part of the meeting:

Members and Guests

Mark Riebau, ASCE, Chairman
Peggy Bowker, NFDA
Mike Buckley, FEMA
Kari Craun, USGS

Kevin Hickey, Fannie Mae
Donald Hull, AASG
Brian Hyde, ASFPM
Wendy Lathrop, ACSM

Members Charles Challstrom, NOAA, Al LeQuang, Freddie Mac, and Mike Moyer, Bank of America were not able to attend. A quorum was present.

The following technical advisors, FEMA staff, and contractors were in attendance for all or part of the meeting:

Maureen W. Bryant, FISCAA
Bill DeGroot, NAFSMA
Gene Gruber, FEMA, Region III
Dennis Lawlor, NEMA
Sally Magee, FEMA
Tom Majusiak, FEMA, Region III

Janet Meleney, Management Assistance Corp.
Matt Miller, FEMA
Zekrollah Momeni, Dewberry & Davis
Janice Roper, Michael Baker, Jr., Inc.
Dick Wild, Michael Baker, Jr., Inc.
Ken Zwickl, USACE

Minutes of March 13-14, 2000 Meeting

Mr. Riebau requested comments or a motion on the second draft, dated 5/20/00. Several corrections were noted.

Ms. Lathrop moved to approve the minutes as amended. Ms. Craun seconded the motion. Without objection, the motion was passed.

Minutes of April 18, 2000 Teleconference

Mr. Riebau requested comments or a motion on the draft minutes, dated 4/23/00. No corrections were offered.

Member Organizations

American Congress on Surveying and Mapping • American Society of Civil Engineers • Association of American State Geologists
Association of State Floodplain Managers • Bank of America, a regulated lender • Fannie Mae • Federal Emergency Management Agency
Freddie Mac • National Flood Determination Association • National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration • U.S. Geological Survey

Ms. Lathrop moved to approve the minutes as submitted. Mr. Hickey seconded the motion. Without objection, the motion was passed.

Announcements

Mr. Miller reported on the status of the support contractor issues. Ms. Lathrop shared some logistic information for the Council dinner.

Mr. Hyde indicated that the next meeting of ASFPM will focus on the actions of the Council and will be examining possible roles for ASFPM in assuming the leadership role in continuing some of the responsibilities of the Council in the future. He also mentioned that a Colorado consultant (Earth Surface Systems) has developed "Smart Maps" that include information on drainage areas. He will arrange a 30-minute presentation in Boulder (first thing Thursday morning).

FEMA updates: Mr. Miller reported on a number of FEMA activities. He indicated that the new scoping planning process is being implemented and there has been new training for the regional engineers. In addition, CTC regional and community staff have been receiving training at the Emergency Management Institute (EMI). There was a brief discussion about the pilot program to decentralize issuance of LOMCs to the Denver UDFCD, but the issue of how fees would be collected has been an obstacle.

The new graphic specifications for digital maps have been released and are posted on the website. All of the *Guideline and Specifications* are being reviewed and will be combined into a single document that will be available on-line and updated regularly. Mr. Miller also mentioned briefly some of the options being considered on prior notification of LOMRs. Mr. Riebau stressed that the issuance of a LOMA or LOMR, without the issuance of a new map and adoption of changes in the local ordinances, does not amend or revise the FIRM at the local level, rather it waives the mandatory requirement to purchase flood insurance. He suggested that this statement be made clearer in the proposed interim rule that was recently circulated for comment. He provided suggested rewording to Mr. Miller.

Mr. Miller indicated that FEMA is meeting next week with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) about funding the CTC program. He also spoke about the budget progress. One of the highlights of the FY 2000 budget was establishment of the Map Modernization Fund that allows FEMA the ability to cost-share with communities. In the FY 2001 budget, \$30 million has been requested from the Disaster Relief Fund for post-disaster mapping. FEMA has also requested authority to collect a \$12 licensing fee every time a FIRM is used to make a determination.

In response to a question from Ms. Bowker about the status of the "Sources Sought" issued for scanned map images, Mr. Miller responded that few responses were received, but they are in the process of being reviewed by a team of contractors and FEMA staff.

Future Meetings

Monday, June 26 11:00-1:00 p.m. (ET)	Teleconference
Wednesday-Friday, July 12-14	Boulder, CO (Natural Hazards W/S)
<i>The field trip on Wednesday 7/12, starts at 8:00 a.m.; all should gather in the lobby of the Regal Harvest House after breakfast and</i>	

wear comfortable clothes and shoes. The formal meeting shall convene in the assigned meeting room at the Regal Harvest House at 1:00 p.m. The Friday session will continue until 5 p.m. and members should plan on leaving late in the day or on Saturday.

Tuesday, August 15, 2:00-4:00 p.m. (ET) Teleconference

Tuesday, September 26, 2:00-4:00 p.m. (ET) Teleconference

Thursday-Friday, October 26-27 San Diego, CA (NAFSMA Meeting)

Tuesday, November 14, 2:00-4:00 p.m. (ET) Teleconference

Annual Report 2000

Mr. Riebau began the discussion by focusing on the options for formatting the report. Ms. Bryant presented her suggestions on three options and distributed a 4th alternative. After discussion on many of the pros and cons of these options, the Council decided to shift its focus to the Recommendations that need to be decided and return to the format after more of the content is determined.

Continuation of the Council: Ms. Craun lead off the discussion by reviewing her paper on continuation of the Council or its responsibilities. She indicated that there were at least four options:

1. Seek Congressional reauthorization of the Council
2. Establish a Chartered Advisory Council to continue the work of the Council
3. Shift some or all of the Council responsibilities to another existing federal working committee (such as the Federal Geographic Data Committee-FGDC)
4. Establish an informal relationship among the NFIP private-sector stakeholder organizations to maintain communication among each other and with FEMA.

Two more variations/options were proposed during discussion:

5. Allow the leadership role to shift to one of the stakeholder organizations.
6. Have periodic FEMA-sponsored meetings/roundtables of stakeholder representatives to review mapping progress and make recommendations on specific issues.

Most of the members agreed that the Council has succeeded at much of what it set out to do and that it was probably time for a new process to take over. Many members indicated that their organizations felt the need to have some forum for continued dialog over issues still in process or new ones that arise. There was also discussion that perhaps the focus of any ongoing group needed to be broadened beyond mapping.

Mr. Hull proposed, and Mr. Hyde amended, that:

"In order to continue the progress made by the Technical Mapping Advisory Council, the Director of FEMA should convene a forum of invited stakeholder organizations annually, or more frequently, to review progress of the Map Modernization Plan and provide viewpoints on the further improvement of Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) and their utilization and distribution." Ms. Bowker made the motion to make this a formal Council recommendation; it was seconded by Ms. Craun. Without objection, the motion was carried.

Unnumbered A-Zones and Unmapped Flood Hazard Areas: Mr. Lawlor indicated that there is potential overlap in the issues and recommendations for Unstudied Areas and Unnumbered A-Zones. In his state, most A-Zones are essentially Unstudied Areas because there is no information on how they were derived. Other members pointed out that this is not the case in some other areas where A-Zones may have flooding history or hydrologic and hydraulic data to support the floodplain mapping.

Discussion on Approximate A-Zones included the pros and cons of regional regression equations or approximate hydrology where detailed studies are not feasible. Conversation revolved around the need to have an intermediate stage between unmapped or unstudied A-Zone and a detailed Flood Insurance Study. Terms for this mid-way stage included: "advisory BFEs," or "enhanced approximate." Mr. Hyde agreed to work with Ms. Lathrop and Mr. Lawlor to develop wording of a recommendation and language to describe this issue. Many members felt that this issue had been covered sufficiently in last year's report. Locating the documentation on which past A-Zone determination was made remains an issue. A decision needs to be made whether the costs are justified.

Mr. Riebau asked Mr. Buckley about the Donnelley study done in the 1980s. It looked at mapped areas and projected growth in floodplains. It was used to help prioritize areas that needed to be mapped or remapped because of development. The MNUSS (Mapping Needs Update Support System) database was built to get a better handle on community profiles. The ideal situation is that in the scoping process, the entire community is assessed for mapping needs and as money becomes available, the entire community is mapped.

Recess:

The meeting was recessed at 4:45 p.m. ET.

Tuesday June 2, 2000

Reconvene

Mr. Riebau reconvened the meeting at 8:35 am, ET.

Annual Report (Continued)

Unnumbered A-Zones and Unmapped Areas (continued): Based on the previous day's discussion, Mr. Hull suggested, with amendment from Mr. Hyde, that:

"FEMA should collaborate with states and utilize MNUSS to determine priorities for unmapped communities." Ms. Lathrop made the motion to make this a recommendation; it was seconded by Mr. Hull. Without objection, the motion was carried.

Mr. Hyde will draft language that addresses recommending different levels of detail study within the guidelines of the scoping process. He will also draft a recommendation for "what is the least level of effort that is acceptable" in delineating floodplains. He indicated that he would

revise the discussion and propose recommendations on both Unnumbered A-Zones and Unmapped Areas.

Flood Insurance Study Reports: Ms. Lathrop reviewed what she had written on Flood Insurance Study reports. Some questions were posed and minor suggestions were offered. Mr. Lawlor and Mr. Zwickel cautioned that if a new study format is conceived, it should not be named the same as what another agency might already be performing (e.g.: do not use Floodplain Management Study or Floodplain Information Report). They suggested "Flood Hazard Study Report."

Several members supported the idea of expanding studies to entire watersheds rather than limiting them to small areas or counties. It was noted that there are many bureaucratic obstacles to this practice. Mr. Miller indicated that there was guidance being developed for Flood Recovery Tools—maps that can be generated after a flood disaster to help communities rebuild.

Mr. Riebau stressed that where a FIS report exists, it be in a form that is accessible to those who may need it. Ms. Roper indicated that the Map Service Center is working toward locating and digitizing all report contents for an eventual web-enabled database. Although the current scanned-image standard is .pdf format, one of the issues is selecting an electronic format that will still be in use five or ten years from now. Data stored using technology from the mid-1990s is now often not retrievable, and even microfiche deteriorates. The obsolescence issue is also true of engineering model algorithms; for example, HEC-RAS has been developed to take the place of the HEC-2 model.

Ms. Lathrop will revise this section and reword the recommendations for approval by the Council at the Boulder meeting.

Cumulative Effects of Watershed Development: Ms. Bowker disagreed that federal regulations limit the community authority; she will help Ms. Lathrop revise the language. Mr. Hyde suggested that this section be broadened to include effects such as wildfires, but the consensus was to leave this discussion focused on the effects of urban development.

Mr. Buckley indicated that Director Witt is sponsoring a roundtable forum next week where a number of floodplain management issues will be addressed. He has asked invited attendees to examine issues regarding the adequacy of the NFIP in reducing flood losses and ensuring that those at risk from flooding are protected. The minutes of this forum will be supplied to this Council.

Introduction: Mr. Riebau asked for clarification on a number of statements he had made in this document. There were several suggestions that this text was good background, but perhaps not appropriate as an introduction. It was pointed out that the "emergency phase" of the NFIP has technically not ended.

Privatization and Partnerships to Implement MMP: Mr. Riebau and Ms. Lathrop will submit the changes they have made to this section based on comments received at the last two meetings. Mr. Riebau indicated that although there are few incentives for the private sector to take on these responsibilities, some states and communities are beginning to take on the

challenge of updating maps. Mr. Buckley elucidated several examples of state and local mapping or mitigation initiatives (Minnesota, California, Louisiana, Maryland, Nebraska, Texas, Clark Co., Nevada).

Ms. Bowker suggested that maybe FEMA needs to create an environment where there are incentives for studies to be expanded beyond what a contractor is minimally hired to do. The expansion might take the shape of mapping an entire watershed or community if the incentive of scale or coordination was present. Incentives that were mentioned include: reduction or elimination of fees, more timely review of requests, or relaxation of requirements.

Report Format (Reprise): Mr. Riebau steered the discussion back to the proposed formats for this report. After more discussion it was decided that the Issues and Recommendations currently being discussed, would be written in an abbreviated Annual Report 2000 following the basic outline of past years but without Progress and Future Directions chapters. These two chapters will form the basis of a separate document, the Final Report, that would summarize the Council's activities, issues addressed and recommendations made by the Council, and progress achieved by FEMA over the entire five years, as well as provide background and appendices relevant to the Council's activities.

Mr. Riebau suggested that the 1966 report on the *Unified National Program for Managing Flood Losses* is a good sample of a report format. Ms. Bryant volunteered to develop a revised outline for the two reports and help Mr. Riebau write a rough draft of the Final Report for the July Meeting.

Mr. Buckley indicated that a consultant to the FGDC recently looked at strategies for financing the development and distribution of spatial data. He will circulate copies of this summary report in hope that it may have some ideas that are relevant to this Council's deliberations.

New Business

FEMA Extranet Web Posting Tool: Ms. Janice Roper of Michael Baker, Jr., Corp, presented a demonstration of the new Extranet website where the Council can post, access, and read or edit, draft minutes and sections of the Council's reports. Council members will be able to download (check-out) draft documents, "redline" them in MSWord, and repost (check-in) their comments/corrections. Each person's comments will show on the document in a different color. All members were instructed to test this process as soon as they return home so that "bugs" can be solved by the staff at Baker.

Agenda for June 26 teleconference call: It was decided not to review the minutes of this meeting at the teleconference call. They will be available on-line for review and comment and will be presented for approval at the meeting in Boulder.

The conference call will concentrate on Issues and Recommendations not addressed at this meeting. The primary writers are requested to have draft issue language and proposed recommendations posted on the Intranet website by June 19. As much as possible, members should review and comment on draft documents prior to the conference call.

Agenda

1. Prioritization of MMP Objectives (Bowker)
2. Public Awareness (Moye)
3. Unnumbered A-Zones (Lawlor)
4. Privatization and Partnerships (Riebau)
5. Format of, and Writing Assignments for, Annual Report/Final Report
6. Agenda for Boulder Meeting

Recess

There being no further business before this Council, Mr. Riebau recessed the meeting at 2:10 p.m. ET.

Respectfully submitted,

[original signed]

Mark A. Riebau
Chairman